

Message Text

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43

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2966

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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SUBJECT: NIMEIRI FACES THE NATION

1. ANALYSIS PRESIDENT NIMEIRI'S EXTENDED "FACE THE NATION" PRESENTATION OF NOV 15 (AT LEAST SUMMARY OF WHICH WE ASSUME AVAILABLE THROUGH FBIS) REVEALS IT AS ONE OF MOST DEFENSIVE OF HIS CAREER. NIMEIRI SOUGHT

REFUTE CRITICISM OVER PRODUCTION FAILURE AT NEW SENNAR SUGAR FACTORY, DELAY IN COMPLETION PORT SUDAN-KHARTOUM OIL PRODUCTS PIPELINE, RISING COSTS PRODUCTION KENAF SACK FACTORY AND WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS "STOP-PAGE OF PRODUCTION" AT NEW CHINESE-AIDED HASHEISA TEXTILE MILL. HE WAS SIMILARLY DEFENSIVE IN REBUTTING ALLEGATIONS THAT SSU MEMBERSHIP GIVES INDIVIDUALS PREFERRED STATUS AND IN COMMENTING ON CURRENT BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DIFFICULTIES, ASSERTING SUDAN'S PROBLEM NO WORSE THAN MANY STATES BUT PROMISING SHORTLY CHAIR SPECIAL CABINET MEETING ON SUBJECT. MEANWHILE, HE URGED LISTENERS TO REDUCE CONSUMPTION OF IMPORTED ITEMS. PRESIDENT DEVOTED MUCH ATTENTION TO RECENTLY COMPLETED ILO MANPOWER UTILIZATION STUDY, NOTING THAT NUMBER OF SUDANESE UNEMPLOYMENT

RATE ONLY 5 PERCENT, VERSUS HIGHER RATES IN WESTERN COUNTRIES. HE

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PROMISED STUDY WOULD BE SUBJECT SPECIAL CABINET REVIEW

UNDER HIS CHAIRMANSHIP.

2. ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, NIMEIRI PROMISED "COMING DAYS" WOULD REVEAL HIGH-LEVEL GOS ACTIVITIES IN "FRIENDLY AND SISTER COUNTRIES" TO CONSOLIDATE SUDAN'S MAJOR DEVELOPMENT. AT LATER POINT, HE ALSO HAILED KING KHALID'S RECENT VISIT, ASSERTING IT WAS HARBINGER OF "MORE FATHERLY COOPERATION" WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF TWO COUNTRIES' "INTERGRATION POLICY". POINTING WITH PRIDE TO SUDAN-EGYPT-SAUDI ARABIA COOPERATION "TO SAFEGUARD THE RED SEA", HE APPEALED TO "ALL COUNTRIES FACING RED SEA" TO JOIN IN ASSURING ITS SECURITY. REFERENCES TO WORLD POWERS NOTABLY ABSENT, EXCEPT FOR PRESIDENT'S BRIEF COMPLIMENTARY ALLUSION TO USA EXPERIMENTS IN IRRIGATED AND RAIN-FED AGRICULTURE DURING HIS JUNE TOUR. HE VOICED HOPE AMERICAN TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE WOULD BE USED INCREASINGLY IN SUDANESE AGRICULTURE.

3. MAJOR SURPRISE WAS SAVED FOR END WHEN NIMEIRI ANNOUNCED DISSOLUTION SPORTS BETTING ORGANIZATION (TUTUKURA). THIS HAS LONG BEEN TARGET MOSLEM BROTHERS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS CONSERVATIVES, AND WEEKLY RESULTS WENT UNPUBLICIZED DURING KHALID'S VISIT.

4. COMMENT. DEFENSIVE NATURE NIMEIRI'S REMARKS SOMEWHAT OFFSET BY HIS OSTENSIBLE CANDOR IN DISCUSSING CURRENT RUMORS AND COMPLAINTS. SAUDIS SHOULD BE PLEASED BY REFERENCES RED SEA SECURITY, AND NIMEIRI DOUBTLESS HOPES ETHIOPIANS MAY ALSO BE INTERESTED. REGIME MAY BE MAKING VIRTUE OF NECESSITY IN ABOLISHING TUTUKURA OPERATIONS VIEW POOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SINCE SPORTING CLUBS ABOLISHED LAST MAY, BUT SAUDIS WILL NO DOUBT ALSO NOTE THIS FAVORABLY. THIS CONNECTION, NIMEIRI'S PERENNIAL EMISSARY TO RIYADH, MINSTATE SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL AFFS DR. BAH A ZLDADIN AL-IDRIS, LEFT LATE NOV 17 BY PRIVATE PLANE FOR FOUR-DAY VISIT SAUDI ARABIA. WE ASSUME HE FOLLOWING UP COMMITMENTS IN PRINCIPLE THAT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MADE DURING KHALID'S VISIT. BREWER

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